

**SPECIAL EDUCATION AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION  
IN AN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONTEXT (SpEd EFL)**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE - E-TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS, AMERICAN ENGLISH INSTITUTE**

**Course Overview**

This course is designed to be a survey of teaching methods that support learners with special needs within the context of the EFL classroom. Participants will read articles, visit websites, and discuss practices that provide teaching strategies for diverse learners with a wide variety of skills and varying levels of performance. A typical assignment for a week may examine subtopics such as the following.

- What are the causes (if any) for the disability?
- What are the symptoms of the disability?
- What are the educational implications and which strategies are helpful in such a case?

The focus is placed on inclusive teaching models, with exploration of the current best practices. As a community of professionals, participants will engage in ongoing dialogue, sharing their experience, success, and concerns in their teaching. A support system will be established with exposure to resources found within individual teaching communities and external locations such as online forums and information centers. Emphasis will be placed on the creation of a resource to take back for sharing among participants' local communities (e.g., classroom, school-wide basis, parents, or local community).

Participants should be able to provide information on at least two web resources they can use to inform colleagues and/or parents in their local setting about disabilities. Participants should use appropriate citation; cutting and pasting information from the Internet or other sources is not acceptable. All wording should be the participants' own.

**Special requirements:** None; appropriate for all EFL educators interested in supporting special needs students.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this course, participants will be able to

- define special education, differentiated instruction, and related terminology
- determine ways in which to identify and support a student with a disability in their classroom
- list the necessary steps to implement a student support plan
- create or locate effective assessment instruments to help evaluate student needs
- identify and apply special education teaching strategies that are in line with local curriculum
- communicate more effectively in English on course topics, pedagogy, and practices by having participated in course activities
- network with fellow English language teaching professionals and benefit from the knowledge and support they receive from them throughout the course and beyond it

## Course Scope and Sequence

Week 1: Course orientation and introductions

Week 2: Defining special education

Week 3: Terms and categories of disabilities

Week 4: Methods and best practices

Week 5: Methods and best practices, continued

Week 6: Assessment strategies (a strength-based approach)

Week 7: Technology and special education; peer review for projects

Week 8: Methods to support or improve communication skills; projects due

Week 9: School-to-home connections

Week 10: Wrap-up: Feedback; sharing projects and action plans; forward planning

## Course Requirements for Certificate of Completion

This class is pass/no pass. Participants receive a final score (maximum = 100 percent) at the end of the course. Participants with a final score of 70 percent or higher will pass the course.

Participants each receive an overall percentage score and grade for this class based on work in three areas:

- Online discussions and tasks (50 percent of the total grade)
- Collaborative case study activities (15 percent)
- Final project with peer review (35 percent)

## Sample Materials and Resources

- Articles from the *English Teaching Forum* journal, <http://americanenglish.state.gov/english-teaching-forum>
- *Different Strokes for Little Folks*, by Carol Bafile
- *Leading and Managing a Differentiated Classroom*, by Carol Ann Tomlinson
- *Scaffolding*, by Heather Coffey
- *Tips on How to Manage a Large Class*, by Aida Pasigna
- *Learning Style and the Special Needs Child*, by Susan Sze
- *How Special?* by Roisin Woolnough